



Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

Recruitment & Retention

Arizona's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

Recruitment and Retention Workgroup

proudly presents:

A Guide to Recruitment and Retention for Early Childhood Professionals

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Why do we need a CSPD?

Arizona's Comprehensive System of Personnel Development (CSPD) was created to support and improve the quality, quantity, and effectiveness of early childhood (EC) professionals. This includes the early intervention (EI) workforce, early childhood special education workforce (ECSE), and early childhood education (ECE) workforce. These are not three separate entities, but one system that supports all of Arizona's youngest learners and their families. This work is the crux of building a foundation that will support early childhood professionals to be ready to work with and support all of Arizona's children.

Currently, the EC workforce faces many challenges, including:

- Personnel shortages
- Training at in-service and pre-service levels
- Alignment to state and national competencies and standards
- Challenges faced by EC personnel due to the diversity of needs of young children and their families
- Compensation and preparation of those providing services

To support this work, Arizona's CSPD collaborated with the Early Childhood Personnel Center (ECPC) and used the ECPC framework to integrate multiple personnel activities that collaboratively address recruitment and retention, preparation, credentialing, ongoing training, and evaluation of cross-disciplinary practitioners and administrators that work with Arizona's youngest children and their families.

Arizona's CSPD Vision Statement: *Our CSPD will ensure that all practitioners who work with young children and their families receive the appropriate training and support needed to provide effective services, which will result in positive developmental and behavioral child outcomes.*

Arizona's CSPD Mission Statement: *In order to accomplish our vision, our team will advocate, create, and implement a statewide comprehensive, early childhood professional development system to improve quality and services for all children and families*

This guide serves to fulfill Arizona's CSPD mission to recruit and retain a highly qualified workforce to serve children and families. This guide tackles the challenges that cause personnel shortages to ensure that all of Arizona's children and families, including those with disabilities, have access to a highly qualified educator and access to the resources and services to support their needs.

Why do we need a recruitment and retention workgroup for early childhood professionals in Arizona?

In 2020, America for Early Ed publication from the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), “high-quality childhood education depends on high-quality early childhood educators who ensure that children, supported by families, have the early experiences they need for a strong foundation.” It is the responsibility of the early childhood system to support the recruitment and retention of high-quality early childhood professionals to be early interventionists, lead teachers, paraprofessionals, related service providers, and more to Arizona’s youngest learners.

The focus of the Recruitment and Retention Workgroup for AZ’s CSPD has been on the recruitment of new early childhood practitioners and the retention of current early childhood practitioners. Our efforts are to ensure that position vacancies are filled and maintained by highly qualified personnel who serve Arizona’s youngest children and families. The workgroup used the quality indicators for recruitment and retention developed by the Early Childhood Technical Assistance Center (ECTA). The quality indicators are as follows:

- Comprehensive recruitment and retention strategies are based on multiple data sources and revised as necessary;
- Comprehensive recruitment and retention strategies are being implemented across disciplines.

Positions in early childhood education can have incredibly high turnover rates. Based on data gathered from Arizona early childhood professionals in 2020, 26% of administrators reported more than 5 positions were currently available at their site and 75% of administrators reported that 1-5 job positions were currently available, which means that 1% of early childhood sites were fully staffed in 2020. Turnover has a financial burden on cities, disrupts culture and community, and most importantly, disrupts the attachment bond needed between an educator and a student. Nationwide, annual teacher turnover costs have risen to a staggering 7 billion dollars (National Education Agency, 2007).

On an annual basis, the Recruitment and Retention workgroup sends out a survey to ECE certified professionals, ECSE certified professionals, special education directors, early intervention contracted agencies, participants in Arizona’s Early Childhood Workforce registry, Head Start professionals, and related services provider listservs. With this annual survey data, the recruitment and retention workgroup has measures of success to demonstrate the impact of their work.

The recruitment and retention workgroup has identified key strategies to recruit and retain highly qualified early childhood professionals. This guide was built for the purpose of getting those strategies into the hands of the professionals in the field.

In the section for recruiting qualified individuals, the guide will give tips on having an effective job posting and where to post jobs that will target early childhood professionals. Making the most of an interview is also important when recruiting the right person for the culture and community of the program. The guide will provide some suggested interview practices that programs could implement to get the most out of an interview with a qualified candidate. Lastly, the section gives some stories from the field about how administrators have found the ideal candidates for jobs and keep them.

In the section for retaining qualified individuals, the guide includes the handout “5 Strategies to Retaining Early Childhood Professionals.” This handout was created based on survey responses in 2020 from early childhood professionals when asked “what keeps you in the early childhood field?” There are also resources on how a program can implement these five strategies. This section also includes activities for administrators to assist a professional when they see educator burnout. Lastly, the section gives some stories from the field about retention strategies.

Strategies for Recruitment

Posting a Job Opening

Where an agency posts for a job opening and what is written in that job posting can make a difference in who responds and applies for the position. In the early childhood field, there are two popular job boards that are used by early childhood professionals when searching for a new position. The first is hosted by First Things First and is part of Arizona's Early Childhood Career and Professional Development Network. The second is hosted by Arizona's Department of Education (ADE) and is found on ADE's website. Below is a short description of each, a video tutorial, and links to access both job boards.

a. (First Things First) Early Childhood Workforce Job Board:

<https://azearlychildhood.org/advance-your-career/jobs/>

Here an educator can search by keyword and/or location for a new job in the early childhood field. This site is available to any Head Start, private child care, school district early childhood program, and more. Educators can also sign up to receive job alerts when a role they might be interested in is posted. As the agency that is looking to post positions, an employer account will need to be created. To watch a video on how to post a job on this job board, please click this link:

<https://youtu.be/aFgda4MuKwM>

b. Arizona Educator Employment Board:

<https://www.arizonaeducationjobs.com/>

The Arizona Educator Employment Board (AEEB) is a one-stop recruitment resource for the state of Arizona's local education agencies. It is a free service of the Arizona Department of Education designed to assist educational entities across the state in attracting high-quality professionals to the field. This site is available to local and public education agencies such as school districts, Head Start, early intervention programs, and charter schools. An employer may create an account here and become a registered employer. If the local education agency chooses not to register as an employer, they can continue as a guest.

Writing an effective job posting is crucial to recruiting the ideal candidate. Taking the time to craft your job posting will help ensure the best chance of having the ideal job seeker apply. Here are some quick tips for writing the ideal job posting:

Dos	Don'ts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do read other job postings on the same job board to get an idea of what other employers are saying. This may give you an idea of how to make your posting stand out amongst the others. • Do be as specific as possible when creating your job title. For example, "Speech Language Pathologist" or "Infant Teacher" • Do create a new job posting for each position so that the qualifications, experience requirements, and other specific job requirements are not combined to avoid confusing the job seeker. • Do create a job posting in multiple categories if appropriate. For example, an Occupational Therapist might be under "AZ Early Intervention" and "Occ. Therapists/Assistants" • Do start the posting with a WOW! And catch a candidate's attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don't use generic or general job titles in your posting. For example, "K-8 teachers" or "SPED professionals." • Don't post several job positions on one job posting unless there are multiple job openings for the same job position. • Do not include a multiple-page job description in the post so that you do not lose the job seeker's interest too quickly. Once the applicant responds, you can reach out via a phone call or email to discuss the various attributes listed in the job description.

In 2021, the CSPD Recruitment and Retention Workgroup sent a survey out to early education professionals in Arizona. Based on that survey, a few programs were identified as having minimal job openings in the year and were retaining their current staff. Workgroup members connected with the directors of some of these programs and conducted interviews to ask about their recruitment strategies. Here are some of the strategies shared during the interview:

Q. When you have an opening, where do you post for candidates?

- “We have an HR department that posts within the agency available positions, but typically the people who work here will suggest an individual that would work well here. I have them invite that person in, they fill out an application, we do an interview and most of the time it works really well!”
- “We have found posting on different social media platforms works the best.”
- “We do a lot of word of mouth and use indeed. They let providers know that they’re looking and then providers reach out.”

Q. How long does it typically take to fill positions?

- “Since we cross-train across positions, we can move staff into vacant positions quickly. It takes approximately 2 weeks for a vacant position to be filled apart from bus drivers.”
- “We post for candidates on social media platforms-Twitter, Facebook-everywhere! So, we get candidates and positions filled usually within 2-4 weeks.”

Q. How do you know you have found the right candidate?

- “Interviews have preliminary questions and also provide them (candidates) an overview of the work, and the expectations of the position which weeds out a lot of candidates early.”
- “During an interview, we meet and greet the entire staff at our center and give them a tour of the facility. We make sure we have introduced the candidate to the policy and procedures of the center and do a 30-day introductory period that ensures the new staff is supported when they start.”

Getting the Most Out of an Interview

When hiring a new early childhood professional, it is common practice to invite potential candidates in for interviews. There are many benefits to having this initial meeting before extending a job opportunity and a center wants to make the most of this time. Here are a few tips to remember when starting interviews:

- ✓ Remember a candidate is interviewing a program to see if it is a good fit for them-be honest and open about the job expectations, the culture of the staff, the hours of work expected, and what might be some other duties they might need to take on.
- ✓ Remember to share the mission and vision of the program during the interview-sharing the vision and mission of the program allow the candidate to agree if their moral principles align with that of the program
- ✓ Remember that attitude and aptitude are what are being measured in an interview, a program should already know the candidate is qualified for the position because of a screening of resumes before an interview. A candidate is also measuring the program's attitude and aptitude as well; they should already know the job description of the position they applied for.
- ✓ Try to have various individuals meet with the candidate during the interview or before extending a job offer. These various individuals would include someone that would supervise, someone that would be a peer, and if applicable, someone that would work for this individual.
- ✓ Ensure the candidate is offered time to ask their own set of interview questions about the program so they can make the best decision for them and see if the program is a good fit for them as well.

Here are some interview questions to consider when interviewing a candidate:

1. Opening Questions:

- Tell us a bit about your work background, and then give us a description of how you think it relates to this position.
- Why are you interested in this position?
- After learning about this opportunity, what made you take the next step and apply for the job?

2. Behavioral:

- If someone told you that you had made an error, describe how you would react and what you would say in your defense?
- What is the toughest feedback you have been given and how did you learn from it? (A can't remember response tends to reveal a worker who is oblivious to their weaknesses or unwilling to accept any fault in their work. On the flip side a good worker can look beyond criticism of that nature and learn how to spin it into a positive opportunity to build character.)
- If someone asked for your assistance with a matter that is outside the parameters of your job description, what would you do?
- What is your preferred work style? (You will learn more about their preferences and how his/her behavior will lend itself to a team –rather than asking if he/she is a team player.)
- What did you do in your present or past position to contribute to a teamwork environment? Be specific.
- Can you tell me about a time during your previous (or current) employment when you suggested a better way to perform a process?
- Tell me about a career goal that you have accomplished and why it was important to you.
- Give an example of a time when you were not able to meet a deadline. What did you do?
- When you have been asked to do too much, how did you respond? (Useful for figuring out if a candidate can admit to needing help)
- What strengths did you rely on in your last (or current) position to make you successful in your work?
- What do you do when you believe you are right, and your supervisor disagrees with you? Give me an example of when this has happened in your career and how you handled it.
- Tell me about a situation you wish that you had handled differently based on the outcome. What was the situation? What would you change about your behavior (or will change) when faced with a similar situation?
- Working with children can sometimes be stressful. Describe ways you manage stress and the types of situations you feel are most stressful to handle?
- Give an example of a situation in which you went above and beyond to get a job done. Explain the outcome. How did you feel when the job was done?
- Have you ever had people give you assignments without complete instructions? How did you handle it?
- Describe a situation where you felt you had not communicated well. How did you correct the situation?

3. Professional Skills:

- Provide two examples of when you worked on a group project. How effective were you?
- Describe your style when working with groups. How does that differ from when you are functioning as the leader in the group?
- Describe a time when you had to go above and beyond the call of duty to get a job done. What was the outcome?

- Provide an example of one of the more difficult or challenging problems in your professional career that you have resolved in the past year.
- What is a problem you have encountered and then solved? (Watch for details. Lack of details is a tell-tale sign of exaggeration; if they really solved it, they will be able to answer multiple levels. If the narrative is lacking, they are probably not the one that solved it, anyone who struggled hard on a problem never forgets it.)
- Describe a time when you anticipated potential problems and developed preventive measures.

4. Diversity Awareness:

- How do you deal with people who think differently than you?
- What kinds of experiences have you had in relating with people whose backgrounds are different from your own?
- What skills or experiences do you possess that would enable you to communicate effectively with individuals with backgrounds different from your own?

5. Interpersonal/Human Relations:

- What is your favorite part of your current/ former job?
- Give us an example of a time when you were able to successfully communicate with another person, even when that person may not have liked you.
- How would your co-workers describe you? Your last supervisor?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses? What have you done to improve on your weaknesses? How will this job help you?
- What are people likely to misunderstand about you? (Reveals how sharp a candidate is in recognizing what others perceive as a weakness in him/her even if it is not a weakness)
- How do you go about gaining the respect of others?
- Describe a situation in which you handled an irate student, customer, or co-worker. What was the outcome?
- Share an example of an important professional goal you have set in the past and explain how you reached it.
- How would your co-workers describe your work style?
- Describe how you like to be supervised, and the best relationship you have had with a previous supervisor.
- What do you do when others reject or resist your ideas or actions?
- What happened the last time you let someone down? (How we pick ourselves back up defines character).
- What do you think are the best and worst parts of working in a group? What are some strategies you use when working in groups?

6. Creativity:

- What was the most creative thing you did in your last job?
- What is your interpretation of "success"?
- Describe an ideal work environment or "the perfect job."
- In what way(s) do you express your personality in the workplace?

7. Customer Service Skills:

- Describe a process or system that you improved so customers would be better served.
- Tell me about a time when you asked for feedback on your customer service skills from your manager or co-worker and then used that response to improve your work.
- Tell me about a time when you knew that your customer might not get what he or she needed

8. Programmatic:

- Which computer software have you used?
- Describe your level of proficiency and provide an example of work you have done using Microsoft Outlook, Excel, Access, Word, PowerPoint, and/or QuickBooks, etc.
- Would you describe your expertise with an operating system (Microsoft/Google/Apple) as Expert, Proficient, Basic, or Entry Level?

9. General:

- What unique qualities or experiences would you bring to this position that no other applicant can?
- Could you share with us a recent accomplishment of which you are most proud?
- What would you have liked to do more of in your last position? What held you back?
- What are your qualifications in your area of expertise, i.e., what skills do you have that make you the best candidate for this position? Include any special training you have had (on-the-job, college, continuing education, seminars, reading, etc.) and related work experience.
- Tell me about your present or last job. Why did you choose it? Why did you/do you want to leave?
- What are your short-term and long-term goals?
- In what areas would you like to develop further? What are your plans to do that?
- How would best describe the way you learn?
- How would you describe your level of accuracy and attention to detail?
- What is your definition of a team player? Do you prefer working as a team member or as an individual? Explain your preferences and how it has impacted your prior work experience.
- What courses did you excel in during your formal education? What courses were your most difficult?
- Give me an example of a time when you had to decide quickly without all the necessary information.
- Tell me about a time when you delegated a project effectively.
- What sorts of things have you done to keep current in your field or advance your career?

10. Closing:

- Offer time for the candidate to share anything else they would like you to know about them that will aid you in making your decision.
- Do they have any questions for you? (after all, you are interviewing each other)

Connecting with Institutes of Higher Education (IHE)

Arizona has a comprehensive system of educator preparation programs which include universities, community colleges, and high schools. Each level of the system advances the education of an educator and often will seek out opportunities for student teaching and practicum. To access Arizona State-Approved Educator Preparation Programs, you can find the list here:

<https://www.azed.gov/teach/enter-the-profession/approved-educator-preparation-programs>.

At the high school level, the school district can offer Career and Technical Education (CTE) in Early Childhood courses. In Arizona, “Educators Rising Arizona” is a Career and Technical Student Organization dedicated to ensuring that the future is full of high-quality educators starting in high school. EdRising Arizona provides students with the opportunities to take what they learn in their Early Childhood Education and Education Professions classes and apply them in relevant, scenario-based competitions at the annual State Leadership Conference. Educators Rising Arizona also offers professional development opportunities and practical applications for students who aspire to enter the teaching profession by providing them with engaging breakout sessions centered around best practices and leadership development. They also offer [scholarship](#) opportunities by competing in our state competitive events. If your local high school doesn’t have an Educators Rising (EdRising) chapter and is interested in starting one, click here:

<https://www.edrisingaz.org/starting-a-chapter>.

When a school district has high school students that are receiving credit for a CTE-Early Childhood course, an early childhood program can invite the CTE high school students to volunteer in the classroom and practice the application of their learned strategies. The high school students do need to meet the minimum licensing requirements to volunteer in the classrooms consistently. This could include but is not limited to obtaining and fingerprint clearance card, having a negative TB test, and meeting the minimum age requirements. Once the CTE student meets these licensing requirements, programs could invite the CTE students to start shadowing lead teachers, supporting other staff, and practicing their course work in an early childhood classroom.

At the community colleges and universities, there are usually courses that require the college students to have hands on learning experience in ECE settings. Some courses could require a minimum of 4-6 hours a week in an ECE setting in the Junior and Senior Year of the college student. Community college and universities are always looking for programs that are willing to sign “Student Placement Agreements” so the students can have these opportunities to work with children and families and develop mentoring relationships.

For a list of Arizona Approved Educator Preparation Programs (AEPP) please visit the [AEPP website](#) to view institutes of higher education and the contact information for them.

For a list of Early Intervention Agencies that could provide opportunities for student placement agreements in early intervention, please visit [AZEIP’s website](#).

Job Fair Opportunities

Arizona Department of Education

www.azed.gov

When: Usually January or February of each year

Where: Usually in Maricopa County (or virtually)

Audience: Arizona public school districts, charters, and schools will be registered on a first-come, first-served basis.


University of Arizona Education Career Day

[UA Career Development Upcoming Career Fairs](#)

When: Usually in the Fall of each year

Where: Usually in Tucson (or virtually)

Recruiting Early Childhood Professionals Practice Profile

Core Component	Contribution to the Outcome	Expected Use in Practice 	Practices Improving	Unacceptable Use in Practice
Description of this component	Why this core component is important to achieving the outcome	Description of practitioner behavior	Description of practitioner behavior	Description of practitioner behavior
1. Advertise available job positions on multiple platforms	Advertising on multiple platforms allows multiple job seekers to be informed of the open positions. This allows you to have a bigger candidate pool to choose highly qualified candidates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs use social media platforms to let families and communities to know of available jobs -Programs use different job banks to post available job openings -Programs use internal job posting systems -Programs send an email to let families know of available job positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs only post for positions on one social media platform -Programs post available job openings on one job bank website -Programs only use an internal job posting system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs only use an internal job posting system
2. Invite interested applicants to an interview prior to offering a position	Offering an interview allows the candidate and the program to make sure they agree on the culture of the program. This will allow a program to see if the candidate fits with the culture and the candidate to see if they can fit with the program's beliefs and values. Interviews help the two parties involved get to know the attitude and aptitude of each other.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs conduct phone screenings before inviting candidates in for an interview -Programs conduct various interviews with different purposes (professional, working, panel) -Programs include a family member in the hiring process on a panel or interview group for potential candidates -Programs have at least 3 references of the individual that are professional and personal -Programs offer an opportunity for the candidate to ask questions of culture and values of the programs -During the interview process programs clearly communicate job expectations, work culture, and program values. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs invite a candidate for one interview that has one purpose (working, professional, panel) -Program does not include families in the hiring process -Program asks for references but may or may not reach out to the references -Programs only interview the candidate and do not encourage the candidate to interview the program as well -The job description is handed to the candidate, but no discussion of expectations and values is communicated. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs do not offer an interview but simply hire based on application responses and resume. -Programs do not discuss job description, expectations, culture and values with the candidate before extending a job offer
3. Attend recruiting educator job fairs	Attending job fairs allows a program to network with other education agencies and meet new candidates. Some job fairs even offer onsite interviews for programs and candidates. Job fairs allow your program to be exposed to more qualified candidates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs participate in multiple job fairs throughout the year -Programs have resources for attendees that might not be qualified for an open position, but are interested -Programs maintain an interest list of educators they meet at the job fair and keep in contact with them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs participate in one job fair annually -Programs gather an interest list of educators they meet at the job fair, but there is no follow up on the interest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs do not attend any job fairs

4. Provide opportunities for cross training	Encourage staff to work together in various positions, allow staff to move between positions when positions open up. If a member of the current staff is interested in more responsibility and higher wages, offer the opportunity to learn that position so they can move into it when it becomes available in little or no time.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs introduce staff to the hierarchy structure of leadership at the program -Programs offer mentoring roles and opportunities for apprenticeship -Programs are annually checking in with staff members to discuss what other roles in the program they might be interested in and if they would like to intern/substitute for some exposure to that role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs have a hierarchy of leadership structure and is only shared with staff at onboarding -Programs offer mentoring roles -Programs ask staff what other roles they might be interested in only when the staff member says they are feeling burned out and need a change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs do not discuss other roles in the program -Programs do offer opportunities to advance within the program -Programs do not talk with teachers when they are feeling burned out or need a change, they just let them resign
5. Offer growth opportunities within your program	Encouraging staff to continue their education allows them to grow within the positions available in the organization as well. Exposure to other opportunities within the program that might fit their interests and education/professional goals will prevent burn out, stagnation, demotivation, and negativity in the workspace. By encouraging staff to grow into their interest they will maintain enthusiasm and productivity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -On an annual basis programs encourage staff to communicate what roles in the program they are interested in learning more about and growing into -Programs talk with staff about their goals, interests, and opportunities within the program that align to those goals and interests -Programs constantly assess if staff are in roles that are still a good fit for them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs encourage staff to communicate what roles in the program they are interested in learning more about and growing into only when they are feeling burned out and need a change -Programs choose goals for staff based on what leadership feels is a good fit for staff without discussing with staff member -Programs wait until a staff member is resigning to make change 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs do not make changes to staffing patterns ever -Programs do not assess staff interests, goals, and workplace morale -Programs do not support staff in promotions or growth opportunities
6. Have good relationships and communication with your local community college or institute of higher education (IHE)	Having a good relationship with institutes of higher education allows your program more exposure to individuals that will be searching for an educator job soon. This could expose the program to a pool of potential candidates that will have higher education at the start of their career. This also could support current staff in continuing their education.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs participate or create opportunities for graduates to present projects/resumes/research to surrounding programs -Programs allow students attending the colleges to get student teaching hours in the programs' ECE classrooms or in homes with families with the proper licensing requirements met -Programs participate or create community events where college personnel are invited and participate in planning -Programs have updated applications and courses offered at local IHE for staff interested in continuing education and talk about them regularly with their staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs allow a few students attending the college to get student teaching hours in the programs' ECE classrooms and in homes with families. -Programs participate in community events where the college personnel may or may not be invited and college personnel are not included in the planning -Programs have a flier for local IHE but do not talk about it often with staff nor encourage conversation about continuing education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Programs do not work with local institute of higher education (IHE) in any capacity

7. Have good relationships and communication with your local school district Career and Technical Education (CTE) leaders and participate in Educator's Rising	Having a good relationship with local Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs and Educators Rising programs allows students to begin their student teaching sooner. This helps students at a younger age decide if the teaching profession is a good fit for them and exposes them to more experience before becoming a certified educator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -All program personnel are given the opportunity to volunteer to mentor Educators Rising students -All program personnel are given the opportunity to volunteer to judge at different CTE and Educators Rising events -Program allows CTE ECE students and ECE Educators Rising students to gain experience in all ECE classrooms with the proper licensing requirements met 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Program leadership only is allowed to volunteer to judge at different CTE and Educators Rising events -Programs allow very few CTE ECE students or Educators Rising students to gain minimal experience in a few ECE classrooms with the proper licensing requirements 	-Programs do not work with local CTE programs or Educators Rising programs
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Strategies to Retaining Early Childhood Staff

In 2021, retaining early childhood educators is difficult in Arizona. A teacher shortage is reported from all four corners of our state, especially in the areas of early childhood education and special education as of 2022. The Arizona CSPD Recruitment and Retention workgroup wanted to develop specific early childhood educator retention strategies that would be research based and supported by survey data.

After conducting a research and literature review of recruitment and retention practices, seven themes emerged as potential predictors of retention: wages and benefits, job satisfaction, organizational characteristics, alternative employment opportunities, demographic characteristics, job characteristics, and education and training (Totenhagen, 2016). Similarly, Bryan Harris discusses four crucial factors that make a difference in teacher retention in his book, *Retaining New Teachers: How do I support and develop novice teachers?* These four crucial factors are: comprehensive induction programs, supportive administrators, skilled mentors, and helpful colleagues. “When effectively combined, these broad areas of support greatly increase the likelihood that new teachers will remain-and thrive-in the profession (Harris, 2015).

In 2020, and again in 2021, the Arizona CSPD Recruitment and Retention workgroup sent out a survey to all early childhood professionals, including related service providers, to inquire about what attributes of a program best retain staff. On the next page, you’ll find the voice of Arizona’s early childhood professionals and the reasons why they choose to stay in their positions year after year. The remainder of this section will focus on how to support administrators to implement some of the retention strategies in their programs.

In a quick summary of the research and the survey data programs should seek to increase pay, recruit staff with more experience, and aim to improve job satisfaction among staff to help increase retention. In addition, government-funded professional development incentive programs may help child care centers meet the goals of a high-quality, educated, and stable workforce (Totenhagen, 2016).”

How to Retain Your Early Childhood Education Staff

Top 5 Retention Strategies

1. Offer a comprehensive compensation package



2. Support work/life balance

3. Provide positive supportive leadership



4. Create a supportive and collaborative culture that respects all parts of the work and is promoted in policies, projects, and practices

5. Provide leadership that support staff in general wellness



Top Five Retention Strategies

Retention Strategy #1. Offer a Comprehensive Compensation Package

Offering a comprehensive compensation package ensures early childhood educators are able to live above the poverty line and have opportunities to continue their education. This will ensure best practices of the latest research and instructional practices for child development are taught to educators and educators can live with minimal financial stresses. When stating, “a fair livable wage” it would be easiest for early childhood programs to align their pay structures to that of the local K-12 public education agencies. It would assist leadership in differentiating wages for support staff, lead educators, and certified staff. Most school district pay scales are available on school district websites, but could also be obtained by calling your local school district. In a comprehensive compensation package, an employer could also include medical, dental, and vision insurance, retirement saving options, access to higher education assistance, life insurance, short-term and long-term disability insurance, annual bonus, annual pay increase, and paid time off for sick days and mental health recovery days.

Retention Strategy #2. Support Work/Life Balance

When preschool program leadership teams can support all staff members with a balance between work and personal time, staff members will be able to avoid burnout, compassion fatigue, and other stresses related to being overworked or having an overwhelming caseload. Supporting time off for all staff members to focus on personal matters will prevent staff from calling out unexpectedly and provide staff with the opportunities to get their basic personal needs met. Leadership should also model balancing work and personal life responsibilities, for example, leadership should not work while taking vacation time. This leads other staff to believe that it is an expectation to check emails or stop by the program when on personal time. All staff need to be aware of what signs of burnout, compassion fatigue, and work-related stress are so that they can support each other and advocate for help when they notice it happening. Leadership can support this by getting to know their staff through 1:1 monthly check ins and ensuring staff have a safe time and place to voice concerns in their professional and personal matters.

Retention Strategy #3. Provide Positive Supportive Leadership

Positive supportive leadership can retain staff because staff will be able to persevere through challenges personally and professionally. When staff know that positive supportive leadership is available at their job, they can overcome personal challenges and have better mental health. When staff feel their leadership supports them to grow professionally, protect them when needed, and care about their staff then they buy into the work more and will participate in helpful ways. Teachers who are supported in their first few years of teaching and feel comfortable to ask questions are more likely to stay in their positions and improve student outcomes.

“While most new teachers are given mentors upon their arrival, the mentor is almost always another teacher with a full course load and additional duties (since most teacher leaders tend to be involved in a plethora of activities). This arrangement leaves little time for true collaboration, and often leaves a new teacher to fend for his or herself (Torrez & Kritsonis).”

Retention Strategy #4. Create a Supportive and Collaborative Culture That Respects All Parts of the Work and is Promoted in Policy, Projects, and Practices

A supportive and collaborative culture that respects all parts of the work is often seen when staff and colleagues appreciate and respect each other. This is best modeled by leadership with their peers and their teams. When staff have pride in their work, leadership will appreciate and value the work being done. When a leader is doing activities that respect all aspects of the work, those activities could be written down and become regular practice at a school or child care center. For example, when bathrooms need to be cleaned or substitutes are needed, everyone from the director/leader of the program to floating staff are ready, willing, and able to jump in and complete the task. No one is “too good” or “too qualified” to do even the simplest of tasks if it is what is best for children, families, and the school. This attitude is modeled, practiced, and expected from all staff members.

Retention Strategy #5. Provide Leadership that Supports Staff in General Wellness

Leadership understands that all staff members are individuals and have basic personal needs that must be met in order to be thriving members of a community. To support retention of staff, leaders need to support all staff having general wellness and help ensure that basic needs are met for staff members and their families so that when staff are working, they aren’t stressed or distracted by personal matters where their basic needs are not being met. This would include staff having access to support for physical wellness, emotional wellness, financial wellness, spiritual wellness, and occupational wellness. Below are some links we have found that can support leaders in implementing this retention strategy.

Wellness links:

<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/how-to-guides/pages/howtoestablishanddesignawellnessprogram.aspx>

<https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/10-quick-ways-employers-promote-workplace-wellness/>

<https://www.simplyhealth.co.uk/content/dam/simplyhealth/documents/Guide-to-employee-emotional-support-REBA-Technical-Training-Series.pdf>

<https://www.futurelearn.com/info/blog/ten-ways-support-your-team-at-work>

<https://www.healthierwork.act.gov.au/supporting-resources/health-information/social-and-emotional-wellbeing/>

How to Identify and Overcome Burnout in Staff

Burnout is a specific kind of work-related stress that can present as mental, physical or emotional exhaustion or, for some people, a combination of all three. In the 1970's, the term "burnout" was coined by psychologist Herbert Freudenberg to specifically describe the consequences of stress experienced by persons in "helping" professions (The Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care, 2020). Because the field of Early Childhood falls under the classification of a helping profession, it is important for agency leaders in the field to be aware of burnout, its effects on their employees, and ultimately their ability to retain qualified staff.

Given that burnout can be mental, physical, and emotional in nature, it can also affect mental, physical, and emotional health and wellbeing. Being able to spot the signs of job burnout can help leaders to support staff and increase retention. The Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care (2020) identifies three main areas of symptoms that can help employers recognize burnout in employees: exhaustion, alienation from work-related activities, and reduced performance.

In the Early Childhood field, teachers and caregivers have the potential for large class sizes or caseloads, active or high-needs students, and responsibilities or tasks that can carry over into hours before and/or after scheduled work time. This can lead to the first identified area of burnout, exhaustion. Employers might notice that exhausted employees have trouble coping, seem tired or have less energy than usual, or even begin to exhibit physical symptoms such as pain, headaches, or digestive issues.

Employees experiencing burnout might also start to alienate themselves from work-related activities. "People who have burnout find their jobs increasingly stressful and frustrating. They may start being cynical about their working conditions and their colleagues. At the same time, they may increasingly distance themselves emotionally, and start feeling numb about their work" (The Institute for Quality and Efficiency in Health Care, 2020). Noticing that a previously passionate or involved teacher or caregiver starts to withdraw from activities or work relationships should prompt leaders to explore whether the employee is experiencing burnout.

The third area of symptoms, reduced performance, is one of the most recognized signs of burnout. A decline in work performance, concentration, and/or creativity along with increased negativity about work related tasks might indicate that an employee is experiencing burnout. Early Childhood professionals failing to complete daily tasks or exhibiting a decrease in their patience or care toward children could indicate that burnout presents a problem. Educators or caregivers who report no longer feeling satisfied or accomplished with their work in Early Childhood might feel like the field no longer suits them, however addressing issues that could potentially be causing burnout could help in retaining a quality employee.

One tool available for use in recognizing burnout is the Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL). This tool was developed by Dr. Beth Hudnall Stamm and is currently owned by The Center for Victims of Torture (CVT) (2021). The ProQOL tool is a free, self assessment that measures both positive and negative aspects of helping through the use of 3 scales: Compassion Satisfaction, Burnout, and Secondary Traumatic Stress. The ProQOL website notes that burnout typically has a gradual onset and is associated with feeling that your effort does not make a difference, including difficulties in dealing with work or doing work effectively (CVT, 2021). Employers can use this tool to measure levels of burnout, as well as levels of satisfaction, in Early Childhood professionals and determine the best course of action to

quell burnout in the workplace. The ProQOL website that includes its terms of use and a copy of the tool are included in the resources section.

In conjunction with recognizing burnout, taking action to mitigate factors that lead to job burnout is an important step in providing support to educators and caregivers and overcoming burnout related turnover. In the Article *Job Burnout: How to Spot it and Take Action*, The Mayo Clinic (2021) outlines a variety of causes and risk factors that contribute to burnout. Many of the risk factors identified by the Mayo Clinic, including heavy workloads or long hours, struggle with a work life balance, and working in a helping profession represent issues faced by those in the Early Childhood field. Additionally, factors such as lack of control over work schedule or assignments, lack of resources needed to fulfill job functions, unclear job expectations, an extremely monotonous or chaotic work environment, and lack of social support can all contribute to job burnout. Implementing strategies to address these factors in the workplace prior to them causing burnout can result in higher retention rates of qualified Early Childhood personnel.

The information discussed in the “Strategies for Retaining Early Childhood Staff” section of this guide directly addresses many of these risk factors and causes for burnout and can be utilized as a resource for addressing causes of burnout. Other strategies for addressing burnout include appreciating employees for their efforts, recognizing the importance of their role and contributions, offering opportunities for growth, and even making time for group exercise to increase endorphins and promote positive relationships (Robinson, 2020).

Another resource, implemented by Fall Hamilton Elementary School in Nashville is the Tap-In/ Tap Out system. This approach recognizes that short breaks reduce stress and burnout. The Tap-In/ Tap Out system pairs teachers with colleagues who have complimentary schedules. When needing a break or extra support in the classroom, they are able to reach out for someone to come and cover their classroom while they take time to recharge. In addition to utilizing this approach, the school promotes asking for help when needed and recognizes that teachers cannot effectively help others until they help themselves. The staff at the school report feeling heard and supported, knowing that they are part of a team (Edutopia, 2018).

Professional Learning Organizations

Arizona Division of Early Childhood (AZDEC) is a professional learning organization for early interventionists and early childhood special educators. AZDEC offers coffee chats for educators to attend virtually and coalesce around specific hot topics early educators face in the field, in addition to low cost professional development! They offer grant opportunities to early childhood educators for up to \$600 three times a year to purchase materials, assistive technology (AT) devices, family engagement materials, additional PD, and field trips for students and families. Email azdec48@gmail.com to inquire about what they are up to this time of year.

Southern Arizona Association for the Education of the Young Child (SAZAEYC)- We believe all young children should thrive and learn in a society dedicated to ensuring they reach their full potential. The Southern Arizona Association for the Education of Young Children promotes high-quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting practice, policy and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children. SAZAEYC offers an annual conference in Tucson every year at the University of Arizona, they host social events to stay up to date with their work, and have monthly discussion groups. As a SAZAEYC and NAEYC member, you join the largest national network of early childhood teachers. As a professional you learn about new ideas in the field, receive book and conference discounts, and experience support from your colleagues. You can visit their website for more information. <https://www.sazaeyc.org/>

Arizona Association for the Education of the Young Child (AZAEYC)- Believe that all young children thrive and learn in a society dedicated to ensuring they reach their full potential. AZAEYC promotes high-quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting practice, policy and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate and work on behalf of young children. AZAEYC believes in advancing the ECE profession through scholarships and professional development. For more information about how to access scholarship awards, connect with AZAEYC and utilize their resources like the AZ Toolkit, check out their website <https://www.azaeyc.org/advance-our-profession/scholarships/> .

First Things First offers scholarships and incentives to advance the careers of early childhood educators. The FTF College Scholarship provides the early childhood workforce working directly with or on behalf of young children birth through age five access to education and training to achieve degrees, credentials and specialized skills to promote children's development. The FTF College Scholarship may only be accessed by members of the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry. Please contact the Arizona Registry at info@thearizonaregistry.org or 1.855.818.6613 to apply for a scholarship. In addition to this scholarship, there are many more listed for early childhood professionals on the Arizona Early Childhood Career and Professional Development Network website.

<https://azearlychildhood.org/advance-your-career/scholarships-and-incentives/>

Onboarding/Training/Mentoring

In 2021, the CSPD Recruitment and Retention Workgroup sent a survey out to early education professionals in Arizona. Based on that survey, a few programs were identified as having minimal job openings in the year and were retaining their current staff through the Covid-19 pandemic. Workgroup members connected with the directors of some of these programs and conducted interviews to ask about their onboarding/training/mentoring practices for new staff. Here are some of the strategies shared during the interview:

Q. What do you do for new staff members to support them in starting the position and throughout the first few years?

- “We meet with the new staff member once a week individually, and once as a group. There is an onboarding protocol that we follow, it continues each school year.”
- “There is a 2-year mentorship program through the district. Really work on mentorship among each other. One day a week where there are no students, so they really try to facilitate a team feeling and professional development on those days. Really try to set the stage and provide time for working together and the family environment. Try to do professional development on how to work together as a team within the classroom. How to really unify the paraprofessional in their work with the teachers and giving the teachers the knowledge on how to navigate the relationship with the paras and how to work together with them. Teachers tend to only leave when they move or retire.”
- “I have two assistant directors. One is responsible for onboarding. She never places a new teacher and a new teaching assistant together. The assistant director pushes into support as well. The support continues after a person is inducted. The support focuses on the specific needs of that staff member.”

Q. Do you have professional development/training for new and existing staff? What does that look like?

- “We provide mandatory training that new hires complete the first week. Coordinators also provide training to new teachers. They have PD once a month for new teachers, and current staff throughout the year. During the summer we have pre-service training for the entire staff.”
- “I pay for them to go. If I invest in them they will invest in our program, they also take online courses through Southwest Human Development.”
- “Within ACT we do training for staff, we do a fall workshop (an all day seminar) they get CEUs, word of mouth knowledge is shared regarding training and workshops that we hear about.”

Q. Describe how the program is able to provide onboarding/training/mentoring and what it looks like? How do you fund that?

- “Grants”

- “We use Survey Monkey to find out what kind of training they want. We have funding through ACT. It is written into their budget to pay for training, and pays for workshops for them to attend.”
- “Try to give opportunities for professional development that staff want. It is easier with larger staff because more ideas are discussed. Try to find things that are free, or inexpensive. Create them personally. The Workforce Registry is an option but it is a bit difficult to navigate. No training is built into the budget unless they get a grant. Will pay up to 40 hours through 301 money but there is not a required amount of training unless you are an admin staff.”

Example Staff Satisfaction Survey Questions

1. How long have you been employed at (program name)?
2. Do you have the resources you need to perform well in your position?
3. How easy is it to get to the resources you need to perform your job?
4. Would you say most of the staff have a unified vision?
5. Does the staff care and respect the clients (children and families) we serve?
6. Does the staff treat each other with care and respect?
7. How accommodating is the program for professionals with disabilities?
8. Are the program's facilities well cared for?
9. How could we improve your professional growth?
10. Do you ever feel burnout?
11. How does leadership encourage you to be creative in your position?
12. What do you think is the biggest challenge you face in your position today?
13. What are some of the things you are most proud of and greatest accomplishments while in your position?
14. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being "not at all" and 10 being "the most", how happy are you with your current job?
15. Would you recommend this program as a place of employment to a friend, family member, or colleague?
16. How does leadership support you in your current role?
17. What more could leadership do to support you in your current role?
18. Do you feel your place of employment offers physical safety? How?
19. Do you feel emotionally and mentally supported by leadership? How?
20. Do you have any specific suggestions for leadership?

In 2021, the CSPD Recruitment and Retention Workgroup sent a survey out to early education professionals in Arizona. Based on that survey, a few programs were identified as having minimal job openings in the year and were retaining their current staff through the Covid-19 pandemic. Workgroup members connected with the directors of some of these programs and conducted interviews to ask about their retention strategies. Here are some of the strategies shared during the interview:

Q. How do you build culture and positive climate despite challenges?


- “It’s not always easy. Listening and understanding their needs. Available to staff in person or on the phone. I make sure they can take their time off even if I am the one that needs to fill in.”
- “My door is always open, whatever challenges come up, I am here to listen. We are very open and create an atmosphere to share those things. We do a lot of communication, even when the conversation can be challenging.”
- “We are very much a family type environment, we encourage communication, check in on how they are doing, encourage them to call if they need help or if they just need to talk. We work hard on empowering our employees, we use recruitment bonus, recognition and reward, recognizing that family is first, work/life balance is important. Recognize birthdays and anniversaries.”

Q. What does your program do to maximize educator retention?

- “The program is flexible and the staff understands the culture. They have a great management team, along with good pay and benefits. Tuition reimbursement is available, and she provides them the paperwork and support to complete the forms necessary to get the reimbursement.”
- “We try to look at each staff member as to their needs, their family needs, & their circumstances.”
- “Really try to maximize training. Be flexible with family life. Value the kids and the families but also value the staff. You can’t always give them the most money but try to make up for it in making them feel valued and supporting them in other ways. Especially the Paraprofessionals. Making sure the support staff feels valued and feels like they have a voice and are part of the team. In the classrooms the teachers do have the final say, but as a team you are all equals.”

Q. Do you have an employee satisfaction survey? And do you make changes?

- “Everyone does one, they rate where they fall, include safety of the children, etc. and we make time to meet with each staff member and go over the survey”
- “Yes, we try to be anonymous, it is hard to be anonymous. Try to be open as a leader and let them know that they can be honest with how they feel.”

Retention of Early Childhood Professionals Practice Profile				
Core Component	Contribution to the Outcome	Expected Use in Practice 	Practices Improving	Unacceptable Use in Practice
Description of this component	Why this core component is important to achieving the outcome	Description of practitioner behavior	Description of practitioner behavior	Description of practitioner behavior
1. Offer a comprehensive compensation package	Programs need to offer a comprehensive compensation package to early childhood educators to ensure they are able to live above the poverty line and have opportunities to continue their education. This will ensure best practices of the latest research and practices for child development are taught to educators and they live with minimal financial stresses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Includes a fair, livable wage at entry level comparable to local K-12 salaries -Access to higher education assistance and reimbursement opportunities -A complete benefits package is offered to all staff which includes medical, dental, and vision insurance and other insurance options (life insurance, short term disability) -Opportunities for learning, coaching, and saving for retirement is offered to all staff -Based on annual performance review, a bonus or annual increase in pay is offered to all staff -Paid time off for physical and mental health recovery, sick leave if offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Includes a fair, livable wage at entry level -Support to access higher education opportunities are presented, but not followed up on -Minimal benefits are offered to all staff which includes a few of the following: Medical, dental, vision, life insurance, short term and long-term disability -Opportunities for saving for retirement are presented only once at start of employment -A increase in pay is offered less than annually -Paid sick leave is offered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -New staff are offered a wage that leaves them below the annual poverty line -Access to higher education is not encouraged and supported -No tuition reimbursement or helping staff find scholarship opportunities -No benefits are offered to staff at onboarding or throughout their employment -No annual reviews are done -No opportunities for increased pay are offered to staff -No paid leave
2. Leadership supports and models work/life balance for all staff	Leadership at programs need to support and model work/life balance for all staff to avoid educator burnout, compassion fatigue, and other stress related symptoms when educators have an overwhelming caseload.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership has annual training to identify signs of burnout, compassion fatigue, and other stress related ailments -Leadership encourages time off for all staff and models it by taking time away as well -Leadership ensures that when staff is off, they truly step away from the job and model that behavior as well -Leadership inquires about staff's thoughts and feelings through 1:1 meetings regularly and ensures staff have an opportunity to let their voices be heard 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership receives one training about identifying burnout, compassion fatigue, and other stress related symptoms -Leadership encourages time off for staff but doesn't take time off annually themselves -Leadership ensures when staff is off, they truly step away from the job, but when leadership is on leave, they still work -Leadership inquires about staff's thoughts and feelings in group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership has no training about identifying burnout, compassion fatigue, and other stress related symptoms -Leadership makes staff feel guilty for taking time off -Leadership doesn't model taking time off by not taking time off and not stepping away when needed -Leadership doesn't engage staff's morale, no staff meetings, no 1:1 meetings for staff are in regular practice

			meetings and doesn't address the voices talking	
3. Program provides positive supporting leadership	Programs need to provide positive supportive leadership to all staff because employees need to have a mentally and physically safe environment they work in. When teachers are supported and positive, they can model and teach self-regulation skills and positive social emotional skills to the children they work with.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership meets with each staff member on personal and professional goals quarterly -Leadership will fill in for any staff member if they have the opportunity and leadership believes that there is no work hierarchy, but everyone pitches in to make the program successful -Leadership supports staff to take additional professional development when funds and resources are available beyond the required PD hours for licensure requirements. -Leadership shares recognition of staff members accomplishments in personal and professional growth when allowed to share. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership meets with each staff member annually to discuss professional goals -Leadership says they will "fill in at any time" but never volunteers and believes in a work hierarchy -Staff is given time during work hours to take professional development and funds to take professional development, but only up to a certain amount to maintain licensing compliance. -Staff is only recognized for major milestone achievements professionally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership does not meet with staff regularly to discuss professional goals -Leadership does not fill in for any staff at any time and believes since they are the "boss" they don't do what a teacher/bus driver/cook/para would do. -Staff are on their own to fund the required professional development and must be done on their own time -Staff does not get time off to take additional professional development that has been identified as helpful for the staff member.
4. Program creates a supportive and collaborative culture	Programs should create a supportive and collaborative culture to ensure that competition amongst staff is minimal. Working together collaboratively will ensure that the entire program is improving in quality, rather than just one classroom or one educator. When programs encourage creative thinking, staff are more involved in the steps to improve and "buy-in" to the strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership completes an annual programmatic review in various forms of parent surveys, staff/employee survey, and program assessments -Leadership presents program data to all staff and has a focused conversation as to causations and possible solutions -Leadership creates an improvement plan based on creative thinking solutions and strategies chosen by staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership completes an annual programmatic review in the one form (parent survey, staff survey, program assessments) -Leadership makes all the decisions for program and staff without including input from staff, but does it based on data -Leadership does create an improvement plan and informs staff about tasks. Once presented is open to staff suggesting changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership makes all decisions for program and staff without data review or inquiring with staff about creative solutions -Leadership does not have any programmatic review in any form -Leadership does not have an improvement plan, or if they do they do not include staff in improvement plans but rather just delegates more tasks and activities
5. Leadership respects all parts of the work and is promoted in policies, projects and practices	Policies, procedures, projects, and practices all support the mission and vision of the workplace. This is so important because all staff members need to feel valued and part of the culture working towards the mission and vision regardless of their position. When all positions are valued and working towards the same goal, staff will work together to ensure the whole team completes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership allows for staff to learn about and buy into the mission and vision during the hiring process -Staff are regularly referring to and practicing the mission and vision -All staff are working on projects and practices that are rooted in the mission and vision -Leadership holds regular staff meetings so that staff can share progress of projects or new creative ideas that will work on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Only once in the hiring process is the mission and vision reviewed with new staff, no agreement or discussion about it being a good fit takes place -Staff know there is a mission and vision for the center, but can not reference it -A few staff members are working on projects and practices that are rooted in the mission and vision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In the hiring process, new staff does not learn about the mission and vision and agree to it -Staff do not know of or refer to the mission and vision in regular practice -Staff are working on separate projects that do not support the mission and vision -Leadership does not hold regular staff meetings or professional

	the mission and continues reaching to achieve the vision.	<p>quality improvement for the whole program..</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership supports staff professional development that aligns with the mission and vision statements -Program creates and edits a constant plan for quality improvement annually -Leadership supports future leaders without raising competition among staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership holds annual staff meetings for staff to share progress of projects and share new ideas that will improve the quality of the center. -Leadership supports staff professional development but doesn't make sure it aligns with the mission and vision of the center -Program has a quality improvement plan in place, but doesn't update it or progress monitor the plan for completion 	<p>development that support new creative ideas or progress on current projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -No quality improvement plans are in action
6. Program leadership supports staff in general wellness	<p>It is important to ensure that every part of a person's life is monitored and improved so that an individual is able to be the best citizen they can be. When caring for children it is important that caregivers are not stressing about other parts of their lives so they can focus on the children in their care and provide the highest quality of care. These areas of wellness include: occupational wellness, emotional wellness, financial wellness, spiritual wellness, and physical wellness.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership supports occupational wellness for all staff which may include opportunities for professional growth, if desired, and professional development -Leadership supports emotional wellness for all staff which may include mindfulness, paid mental health days, adjustable work schedules and a collaborative culture -Leadership supports financial wellness for all staff by providing livable wages, learning money management opportunities, and a full comprehensive benefits package -Leadership supports spiritual wellness by allowing staff paid days off to observe religious holidays or culture days of importance and encouraging cultural diversity in policy -Leadership supports physical wellness of all staff which may include collaborative exercise events or other ideas that encourage staff to increase physical wellness and having paid days for doctor appointments and sick days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership supports professional development for all staff, but staff is not encouraged to grow professionally -Leadership allows for mindfulness or de-stressing strategies during the workday but does not allow for staff to take a day off for mental health -Leadership supports financial wellness for all staff but doesn't offer a livable wage nor a full comprehensive benefit package -Leadership observes state and federal holidays off and pays staff for those days off -Leadership supports physical wellness by offering 1 or more paid sick days a year 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Leadership does not support professional growth or professional development for any staff -Leadership does not allow for paid mental health days -Leadership does not allow for flexible work schedules and doesn't have a collaborative culture where staff support each other's personal lives -Leadership does not support financial wellness in staff at all -Leadership does not allow for observing of religious holidays or days of cultural importance for staff -The program does not allow for paid sick days to attend doctor appointments or recover from illness

Additional Early Childhood Recruitment and Retention Websites

- Head Start, ECLKC-“Human Resources Systems to Recruit and Retain Responsive Staff”
<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/video/human-resources-systems-recruit-retain-responsive-staff>
- Office of Special Education- [\(Attract, Prepare, Retain: Effective Personnel for All\)](#), [Enhancing Professional Leadership](#), [Induction and Mentorship](#), [Ongoing Professional Learning](#), [Professional Empowerment](#), [Supportive Workplace Environments](#)
- National Association of State Directors for Special Education · [Recruiting and Retaining Qualified Special Education Personnel](#), and [Recruitment, Hiring, Training and Retention for Preschool Children with Disabilities: State Approaches](#)
- Council for Exceptional Children: [CEC: Recruitment and Retention Topics](#)
- Infant and Toddler Coordinator’s Association · [New Staff Orientation to Part C](#)

Resources

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